

ASPIRA NEWS

National Newsletter of the ASPIRA Association, Inc.

Volume 7, No. 4

Summer 1994

ASPIRA to participate in AmeriCorps National Community Service Program

The Corporation for National and Community Service has selected the ASPIRA Association to participate in the new AmeriCorps program starting this fall. ASPIRA will receive a \$650,000 grant which will be used to place forty AmeriCorps members in three ASPIRA Associate offices. AmeriCorps is a part of President Clinton's national service initiative.

Twelve AmeriCorps members will be placed in Bridgeport, Connecticut and Newark, New Jersey, with sixteen members in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In each city the AmeriCorps members will be divided into two teams, a school success team and a crime control and prevention team.

"Community service has always been a cornerstone of ASPIRA's vision for youth. We are pleased to be participating in this national effort," said Ronald Blackburn-Moreno, ASPIRA's National Executive Director.

The school success teams will be trained to provide middle and high schools students with language skills and mathematics tutoring, essay-writing and test-taking workshops, and Saturday field trips. They will also teach literacy/English language skills to parents.

The crime control and prevention teams will equip middle and high school students with conflict resolution training, event planning workshops, and co-

ordination of youth clubs in anti-violence campaign activities. They will also hold community advocacy training work-

shops for parents and will coordinate with schools for public safety service-learning activities.



Jaime Santana, National Chairperson, presents Janice Petrovich, former National Executive Director, with a plaque honoring her hard work while at ASPIRA. See complete story of ASPIRA reception on Capitol Hill page 6.

AmeriCorps volunteers will be chosen by ASPIRA and by the national AmeriCorps office. An AmeriCorps leader will be based in Newark, New Jersey to provide support for volunteers during the coming year.

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PLUS: *The State of Hispanic Education, 1994.....A Special Insert*



Director's Corner

Every so often it is important to step back for a moment and reflect on where we are and where we must go. In the coming issues of *The ASPIRA News* I want to use this space to share some thoughts on the state of our struggle to ensure a quality education for all Latino children; what we have learned in the past decades and where we stand today. I will propose that the time has come for a new mobilization to produce the fundamental changes needed so that every Latino child receives the education he or she is entitled to.

I will argue that, after decades of struggle, things are getting worse rather than better. We are losing the battle to educate our children and the trend will not be reversed unless we are able to mobilize our community in a new way. Today, we must fight every

day so that what we have already achieved is not taken away. Our backs are slowly but surely being pushed to the wall by an education system that continues to fail our children. As this situation deteriorates further and becomes intolerable, we will be moved to take more drastic action. I will argue also that the fundamental changes that are needed can be produced only through the power generated by community mobilization. However, the mobilization of the 1990's and beyond must be different from those of the past. It must include all the strategies we have learned to use through decades of struggle, from marches in the streets to waging legal battles in our courts, to the more subtle advocacy and lobbying we do in states and before Congress. But it must combine these strategies in new ways and with a new organizational base.

A New Mobilization

I will argue that we have made two critically important gains in the past three decades. First, we now have a range of experience that allows us to use a multitude of strategies to produce change to improve education for our children under different circumstances. We know how to mobilize a community, to organize parents, to use the courts, to advocate at the local and national levels, to lobby legislators, and to persuade those that make decisions that affect us. Second, we have developed a strong and growing organizational infrastructure as seen in the large number, diversity and strength of our Hispanic organizations that, if brought together, can be effective in promoting and directing this mobilization.

coalitions of our groups to mobilize entire communities at the national or local levels, if that is what is warranted, developing joint advocacy initiatives before state legislatures or Congress when this can be effective; or coming together to persuade business to support education in a particular community.

Finally, I will argue that there is another side to this new mobilization. It should not only be an effort to exert the power to make others change, but it must include the things that we can do for ourselves. In this too we have a strong background. We know how to train parents to better help their children in school, how to provide enrichment experiences for our youth, develop mentoring

programs, provide guidance to youth, or develop leadership in our communities. However, the key is that working individually our effectiveness will be limited, whereas working together we can not only

"I see some evidence of this new mobilization already. There is a growing unity of our Hispanic organizations in advocacy and the willingness to engage in joint programs in our communities."

What we have been unable to do is recognize and effectively use our collective experience and organization to work together. Furthermore, the lessons we have learned and the organizational capabilities we have developed over the years are not unique to Hispanics. Other minority groups have also learned and have organized well, and we have more to gain by working with them than by going out on our own.

The condition of the education of our children, our collective experience and our organizational strength combine to set the stage for this new mobilization. It will consist of bringing together our organizations to use those strategies that we know are most effective and that we know how to use in each circumstance, uniting our legal organizations to take cases to court where necessary; creating

learn from each other, but we could reach thousands that we are not reaching.

I see some evidence of this new mobilization already. The growing unity of our Hispanic organizations in advocacy and the willingness to engage in joint programs in our communities, the development of common agendas, such as the Boricua First Campaign, the creation of new umbrella organizations are some examples at the national level. There are others at the local and state levels. If we recognize the power of what we know, of our organizational strengths, and are able to act to bring these together, I believe we will see fundamental change in the education of our children.

To be continued.



Three Aspirantes from **ASPIRA of Connecticut** in Bridgeport graduated with honors this June. **Sarivette Rodríguez** was named Valedictorian and **Edlyn Pugin** was named Salutatorian of Harding High School, while **Evelyn Del Valle** was named Valedictorian of Bassick High School. The community is particularly proud that two of the three valedictorians in Bridgeport this year are Puerto Rican. . . . Twenty-eight Aspirantes from Bridgeport's three high schools spent the weekend of June 17 and 18 at the YMCA Camp Hi-Rock in Massachusetts. Students were taught skills such as leadership, teamwork, planning, trust-building, and how to increase their self-confidence.

ASPIRA of Florida hosted the Third Annual Young Latinas Conference on March 9. Over 150 Latinas from 22 ASPIRA Clubs attended the conference entitled, "Claiming the Present, Rewriting the Future." The keynote luncheon speaker was **Maria Elena Torano**, president and CEO of META (Maria Elena Torano Associates). . . . Over 800 elementary, middle, and senior high school students who participated in the ASPIRA Youth Leadership Program from 22 public schools and six outreach community-based clubs received awards during the 13th Annual Youth Awards Ceremony May 27. Students were honored with awards that highlighted community service, leadership, academic improvement and family involvement. Aspirante of the year awards went to **Danny Menéndez**, **Louis Dilbert**, and **Tracy Wieszala**. . . . Congratulations to three staff members who recently received recognition for

their efforts. **Raul Martínez**, Executive Director, was nominated for the United Way Human Services Professional of the Year Award. **Milagros Torres**, Executive Assistant, received the Unsung Heroine Award from the City of Miami Commission on the Status of Women, and **William Ramos**, Deputy Director, had an article published in *El Nuevo Herald* about the plight of the Wynwood neighborhood.

Twenty-seven students from the ASPIRA Alternative High School at **ASPIRA of Illinois** graduated on June 24. Part of the school's mission is to encourage the students to pursue a higher education and to be active contributors and leaders in their communities and society. The curriculum is based on improving basic skills and developing social, personal and career goals. . . . During this year's ASPIRA of Illinois awards banquet, **José G. Matos-Real**, former national Chairman, was honored through a special dedication of a scholarship in his name. The first recipient of the award was **Tania Rodríguez**, a 1993 ASPIRA National Intern. The Matos family announced a \$5,000 contribution to the scholarship fund.

Aspirantes from **ASPIRA of New Jersey** coordinated and presented this year's Eighth Annual Statewide Youth Conference at Rutgers University on April 29. They presented topics on School Violence, Access to Higher Education, Community Service, and Sexual Responsibility. Keynote Speaker **Alicia Díaz**, Director of the Center for Hispanic Policy, Research, and Development, gave a motivational speech on how policy issues affect the lives of Latino youth.

The first Youth Empowerment Day at Bronx Community College on June 24 was a triumph for Aspirantes at **ASPIRA**



Students and counselors from ASPIRA of Florida's Antonia Pantoja Club bring cheer to a homeless shelter during Easter.

of New York. Students who wanted to participate were required to write an essay on school violence and youth/police relations. Over 80 Aspirantes from the South Bronx Beacon Program and the surrounding South Bronx community attended the event. **Fernando Ferrer**, Bronx Borough President, and **Bud Carey**, CBS General Manager, hosted the conference and promised to host five more Youth Empowerment Days within the year. . . . After a year of hard work, ASPIRA of New York successfully met its challenge grant of \$125,000 from the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund. Congratulations on an excellent job! . . . ASPIRA's services in New York are expanding, as Rockland, NY celebrated its first Areyto ceremony June 4th. Over 40 students from five Rockland County schools took the Areyto Oath to commit themselves to cultural development and to empowering the Latino community.

The Philadelphia Foundation, a nonprofit organization that guides incomes from individual and family trusts to nonprofit organizations, awarded **ASPIRA of Pennsylvania** a \$30,400 grant in April. Funding from the organization will go toward general support for ASPIRA of Pennsylvania's programs. . . . Over 150 students and parents attended the 23rd Annual Awards Ceremony in Philadelphia in June. The ceremony's highlights

(Continued on page 7)

Aspirante leaders in nation's capital

Fifteen high school students from across the country participated in the ASPIRA Public Policy Leadership Program (APPLP) National Internships June 30 through August 5. After a year-long program, facilitators at each of the ASPIRA Associate offices chose outstanding students in their program to participate in the national internship program.

Each student worked thirty hours a week with a mentor in a public policy field. Mentors included Secretary of the Department Transportation Federico Peña, Secretary of the Department Housing and Urban Development Henry Cisneros, and U.S. Representative Nydia Velázquez.

During the internship, the students participated in workshops and discussed issues such as college attendance, racism, and other internship opportunities in Washington, D.C. They also went on a trolley tour of Washington, D.C., a trip to Busch Gardens (Compliments of Anheuser-Busch) and a tour of the National Holocaust Museum.

Grant Vitale, ASPIRA's Manager for Youth Leadership and Community Service, said the students were very pleased with their internships. He said the students benefit most from the people they have met.

"The students made the most of their mentorship experience," said Vitale. "With such a variety of mentors, the students are able to experience first-hand the different areas of the public sector."

Allen Piñero-Fontanes, an Aspirante from ASPIRA of Puerto Rico, said his experience has been inspiring because his mentor, Roberto Esparza, from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), has taken the time to share his

responsibilities and to show him interesting places. Piñero-Fontanes said he will attend the University of Puerto Rico in Carolina and will study Accounting.

Students ended their internships with a Capitol Hill graduation ceremony. This year's keynote speaker was Dr. Eugene Garcia, Director of the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Lan-

guage Affairs at the U.S. Department of Education.

Also in attendance representing Toyota, the program's funder since 1990, were Douglas West, Group Vice President, Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. and Patricia Hull, Program Officer, The Toyota U.S.A. Foundation.

National APPLP Interns and their Mentors

Allen Piñero, ASPIRA of Puerto Rico—**Rolando Esparza**, Hispanic Employment Program Manager, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation

Hugo Andrade, ASPIRA of New Jersey—**The Honorable Federico Peña**, Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation

Wilson Hernández, ASPIRA of Illinois—**Jo Anne Schneider**, NASA

Joshua Cortes, ASPIRA of Pennsylvania—**Alma Ríos Esparza**, The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services

Daisy Seda, ASPIRA of Pennsylvania—**José Ortiz-Dalot**, Senior Vice President, The Jefferson Group

Rosaura Hernández, ASPIRA of Pennsylvania—**Alicia Cora**, U.S. Department of Education

Nahir Gil, ASPIRA of Florida—**The Honorable Henry G. Cisneros**, Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Myriam Gualdape-Cruz, ASPIRA of Puerto Rico—**The Honorable Henry G. Cisneros**, Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Alicia Pichirilo, ASPIRA of Florida—**Elvira Valenzuela Crocker**, President, MANA

Amanda Ramos, ASPIRA of Illinois—**Eugene García**, Director, OBEMLA, U.S. Department of Education

David Rodríguez, ASPIRA of Puerto Rico—**Charles Rivera**, Director, Public Affairs, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

Jorge González, ASPIRA of Illinois—**The Honorable Luis Gutiérrez**, U.S. House of Representatives

Agustín López, ASPIRA of New Jersey—**The Honorable Robert Menéndez**, U.S. House of Representatives

Joan Vera, ASPIRA of New York—**The Honorable Nydia Velázquez**, U.S. House of Representatives

Latacha Brown, ASPIRA of New York—**The Honorable Major Owens**, U.S. House of Representatives

APPLP: A long road to DC internships

The APPLP Interns who come to Washington for a summer internship begin their journey long before July. Laura Hurtado, an APPLP Intern from Chicago, describes the year-long program at ASPIRA of Illinois in the following article. While specifics vary by site, all ASPIRA offices use the same structure of seminars, speakers, community service, and internships.

Students attend leadership seminars on Saturdays from November through April, and eventually receive a 40-hour paid internship in their area of interest. Select students are then nominated for a summer internship program in Washington, DC.

Geraldine Franco, 17, a junior at Amundsen High School, participated in the program this year. "I developed skills for leadership, commitment, and lots of responsibility," she said.

Our leadership seminars consisted of information about Latino culture, public policy, and leadership skills. Much of the program focused on the situation of Puerto Ricans and Latinos in the United States. To gain a fuller understanding of

the concepts being presented, guest-speakers such as Aldermen Billy Ocasio and Rick Muñoz, and State Senator Miguel del Valle would present their own ideas and thoughts to the group. We got the opportunity to discuss and debate many topics.

During the second phase of the program, we put our skills and ideas into action by planning a community service project. We decided to organize a Youth Roundtable at Roberto Clemente High School, which consisted of workshops on civil rights, health, economic development, housing, community development, and education. Each of the APPLP participants were responsible for planning and organizing the workshops and the Roundtable sub-committees. Nearly 100 students from area high schools attended.

The final component of the program is involvement in the community service internship during our spring break in April. Nineteen students participated in internships in law offices, housing agencies, political offices, and media.

Jocelyn Luna, 19, of Amundsen High



The 19 students in the ASPIRA of Illinois program.

School, said, "I have more confidence in myself now. I learned that if you really want to do something, you can do it if you try hard."

Everett Interns work hard during summer

The Everett Public Policy Internship Program sponsored five college students to work in the ASPIRA National Office this summer. Each intern researched and assisted in five of ASPIRA's most successful programs.

Melissa Chabrá, legislative analyst intern, was responsible for tracking and analyzing federal legislation of importance to ASPIRA, primarily in the areas of education and human services. She also conducted research on waivers and schoolwide projects and wrote an issue brief for publication.

Aida Montalvo, program develop-

ment intern, assisted in scheduling and coordinating events for the APPLP National Interns. She also assisted in developing the graduation program for APPLP's closing ceremony.

Birago Jones, dropout prevention intern, wrote the site evaluations for middle school prevention programs in all ASPIRA associate sites. Birago was also in charge of writing the manual for the Teachers Organizations and Parents for Students Program.

Paloma Marchand, program development intern, researched and produced a detailed progress report on the develop-

ment of for the Alumni Association project. She also helped develop a manual based on the achievements of the ASPIRA of New York Alumni Program for the remaining sites to follow.

Antigoni Koumpounis, health policy intern, attended and reported on several health policy and education related hearings. She reviewed educational curriculum materials to attract minorities, especially women, into math and technology fields. Antigoni was also responsible for interviewing Aspirantes who are involved in health careers today for feedback on the ASPIRA process.

ASPIRA reception marks leadership change

The ASPIRA National Office hosted a reception May 19 bringing together Washington advocates, educators, and government officials to honor the accomplishments of Janice Petrovich, ASPIRA's former National Executive Director, and to celebrate the arrival of the new National Executive Director, Ronald Blackburn-Moreno. Petrovich was awarded a plaque for her hard work during eight years at ASPIRA.

Norma Cantú, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education, Nelson Diaz, General Counsel at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Puerto Rico's Resident Commissioner Carlos Romero-Barceló, and other prominent Latinos attended the reception and showed their support for ASPIRA. The good spirit was so pervasive that the reception lasted an hour longer than planned.

Top right: Norma Cantú, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at the Department of Education. Below: Crowd gathers to hear ASPIRA chairperson Jaime Santana.

Bottom right: Ronald Black-Moreno, new National Executive Director, with Bernard L. Charley, Senior Executive of the McKenzie Group.





Facing the Facts

The State of Hispanic Education 1994

*A Fact Sheet produced by the
ASPIRA Institute for Policy Research*

Hispanic Families

● The Hispanic population in the U.S. is growing much faster than the rest of the population. Between 1980 and 1993, the Hispanic population had grown 56%, to 22.8 million people — 9% of the national population. If Puerto Rico is included, the number of Hispanics is 26.3 million or 10% of the total population. In the same period the non-Hispanic population grew by only 6.8%.

● The Hispanic population is statistically younger than the non-Hispanic population. In 1993, the median age was 26.7 years for Hispanics and 34.4 years for non-Hispanics. Thirty percent of the Hispanic population but only 22% of the non-Hispanic population was under 15 years of age.

● In 1992, 26.2% of Hispanic families lived in poverty, while the corresponding figure for non-Hispanic Whites was 7.3%. This figure represents a 3% increase for Hispanics from the previous year—the highest among ethnic groups.

● Children are particularly vulnerable to poverty. Nearly 40% of Hispanic and 20% of non-Hispanic children under the age of 18 years old lived in poverty in 1992. Hispanic children accounted for over one-fifth of all U.S. children living in poverty in that same year. In 1992, more than half (52%) of all Puerto Rican children were living in poverty.

● Parents' education level plays an important role in whether or not children will live in poverty. In 1990, 37% of Hispanic children whose parents had a grade school education or less lived in poverty, compared to 19% of children whose parents were high school graduates and 14% of children whose parents had continued their education beyond high school.

Education Spending and Personnel

● Spending on education now accounts for nearly half (47%) of state and local budgets. State spending increased

for both K-12 and higher education between fiscal years 1993 and 1994.

● Large urban school districts, which have a 28.9% Hispanic enrollment, are chronically under-funded compared to other districts in the states. While dealing with more disadvantaged students, large urban districts were allotted an average of \$5,200 per pupil in 1991, compared with \$6,073 for suburban schools. That amount was also below the \$5,512 national average.

● Sixty-six percent of black elementary and secondary school students and 73% of Hispanic students attended schools that were predominantly composed of minorities in the 1991-92 school year. However, in 1993, only 8% of teachers were Black and 3% were Hispanic.

Preprimary Education

● For all races, children from families earning under \$20,000 are approximately half as likely to be enrolled in nursery school classes as children from families earning over \$40,000.

● At all income levels, a smaller percentage of Hispanic children are enrolled in nursery school than other children. In 1992, 18.3% of Hispanic 3-4 year olds were enrolled in nursery school, compared to 29.2% of Black children, and 34.6% of White children.

Elementary and Secondary Education

● Hispanic students made up 11.6% of all elementary school students and 10.4% of high school students enrolled in 1992. However, they made up one-fifth of schoolchildren whose families earned less than \$20,000.

● The number of Hispanic children in central city schools doubled between 1973 and 1991, rising to 20.6% of total enrollment. It is projected that Hispanic enrollment will

increase 54%, from 3.3 million students in 1985-86 to 5.1 million in 1994-95.

●Hispanic 12-19 year olds are more likely than any other group to report the presence of street gangs in their schools. One in two Hispanics, one in three Whites, and 42% of Blacks reported that gangs operated in their schools in 1992.

●Hispanic youth are also likely to report having been physically attacked at their school -- 15% of Hispanic students in the 12th grade, 18% of those in the 10th grade, and 22% of those in the 8th grade reported such an incident in 1992.

●Hispanic high school students aged 16-24 are generally more likely than Black students but less likely than Whites to be working while enrolled in school. However, Hispanics are far more likely than other high school students to work 35 hours a week or more. Among Hispanics, 3.7% compared to 2.2% of all students worked at least full time while in high school in 1992.

●Hispanic scores on the Scholastic Achievement Tests (SAT) have in general improved from the mid-1970's to 1992, although they were at least 40 points lower than the national average.

●More than 1,200 colleges and universities accept Advanced Placement (AP) test scores for credit or placement. Between 1992-93, the number of Hispanics taking college-level AP tests increased by 14%.

●Between 1982 and 1990, Hispanic high school graduates devoted an increasing share of their total high school course-work to the recommended core courses, from 6.3% to 32.7%. Black and Asian students showed similar increases, while White students increased the time they spent on core courses from 14.9% to 40.5%.

Factors Affecting School Retention

●Researchers continue to find large differences in dropout rates between socioeconomic groups. In 1992, 44.7% of Hispanic students aged 16-24 from low-income families dropped out, compared to 25.2% from middle-income families and 9.6% from high-income families.

●Migration is a contributing factor to the high Hispanic dropout rate, but it does not completely account for it. While 31% of all Hispanic 16-24 year olds had dropped out of school by 1989, the figure was 43% for those who had been born outside the mainland U.S. However, dropout rates for first- and second-generation Hispanic youth were still well above the national norm -- 17.3% for first generation and 23.7% for second generation youth.

●Ability to speak English factors significantly in a student's capacity to stay in school. In 1992, of those Hispanics who did not speak English well, 62% dropped out of high school, compared to the 17% dropout rate of students who did speak English well.

●During the 1991-92 school year, there were 2.31 million limited English proficient (LEP) students in the United States -- a 70% increase from 1984 -- and 3 out of 4 of these students spoke Spanish as their home language. Despite this number, 45% of districts with LEP students reported offering no instruction that used the native language, thus causing students to fall behind in content classes as they struggled to learn English.

●In 1992, students who had repeated grades seven through nine had a much higher dropout rate (34.1%) than students who were retained in grades K-6 (16.7%) or 10-12 (19.1%). Students who had never been retained had an average dropout rate of 9.4%.

●The average number of years of school attended by Hispanics of all ages was 10.2 years in 1992. This

Percentage of 16-24 year olds who are high school dropouts

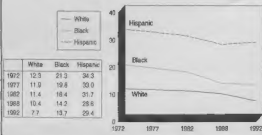


figure continues to increase, although Hispanics still have less years of education than the general population.

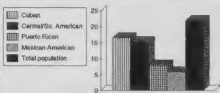
College Education

● Hispanics are less likely than other groups to be in college. Although they were 17.7% of the population age 15-24, they were only 7.8% of students enrolled in college in the fall of 1992.

● More Hispanics are going to college after high school. Between 1980 and 1991, the college participation rate for Hispanic high school graduates age 18-24 increased from 29.9% to 34.4%, while the participation of Whites also increased from 32.5% to 41.1%.

● Although the educational attainment of parents is a significant factor in whether or not a student will attend college, it is less so for Hispanic students. More than 80% of both White and Black children whose parents finished four or more years of college participated in post-secondary education, compared to the less than 60% of Hispanic children in 1991.

Percent of population 25 and over with a bachelor's degree



● Hispanics are the only major ethnic group to be more likely to attend two-year than four-year colleges. More than 52% of Hispanic undergraduates were attending two-year colleges in 1992, compared to 36% of Blacks and 36% of Whites.

● More Hispanics, Blacks, and Whites get their Bachelor's degrees in Business than in any other area of study, followed by the Social Sciences and Education. The Bachelor's Degree in Business is most popular among Asian Americans as well, but they choose Engineering second and Social Sciences third.

● In 1992, more than half (52.3%) of the Hispanic population came from families with incomes of less than \$20,000. This may account in part for Hispanic college students being slightly more likely to be employed full-time while attending college part-time (26.8% compared to 25.3% of Whites and 21.6% of Blacks).

● The average cost (tuition/fees, supplies, room/board, and transportation) of attending a public college or university in 1992-93 was \$8,071. For a private institution it was \$17,027. Median household income in 1992 was \$32,311 for all non-Hispanic White households, \$22,688 for all Hispanic households, and \$17,967 for all Puerto Rican households.

● After adjusting for inflation, public college costs increased 26% and private college costs increased 43% from 1982 to 1991. Overall median family income increased by 11%.

● Federal grant and work-study programs increased their funds by 34% from 1983-84 to 1991-92, after adjusting for inflation. State grant programs increased by 31% and institutional and other grants increased by 104.5%. Guaranteed federal loan program funds increased by 32.4%. Yet because expanding numbers of students apply and qualify for financial aid, the average amount received per individual has actually declined in real dollars for most federal grant and loan programs.

● The amount of student costs covered by the Pell Grant Program has decreased over the past decade. In 1979-80, Pell Grants paid for 77% of the average institutional charges at a public four-year college or university, but by 1992-93, Pell Grants covered only 39% of those costs.

● Thirty-six percent of Latino undergraduates received federal aid in 1989 – an 8% decrease from 1986. However, institutional aid to Latino students increased over the same period of time. In 1986, colleges and universities awarded grants to 14.7% of their Hispanic students, compared to grants awarded to 16.2% of Hispanic students in 1989. Yet this increase is not sufficient as Hispanic students still receive less financial aid than students from any other ethnic group.

● About 38% of all Hispanics who started college completed four or more years by ages 25-29 in 1991. Although this was well below the 53% completion rate for White students, it marked an improvement over completion rates in the 1970's, which hovered around 33%.

● Women of all races were more likely than men to earn their Bachelor's Degree in four years or less. In 1990, 38% of Hispanic females, 36% of Blacks, and 51% of Whites completed a Bachelor's degree in four years.

● Hispanics do not participate in and do not complete graduate education proportionate to their population. From 1985 to 1991, the number of Hispanics receiving master's degrees increased by 27%. However, these gains did not keep pace with the growth of the Hispanic population aged 20 to 26, which increased 51% from 1980 to 1990. As a result, in 1991 only 2.5% of all master's degrees were awarded to Hispanics.

● Women have made significant gains in the number of doctorates earned over the past decade. The number of Hispanic women earning doctorates has increased 85% from 1982 to 1992, while the number of Hispanic men earning doctorates increased by 17% over the same period of time.

School to Work Transition

● In 1992, 62.8% of all recent high school graduates were employed, but only 53.9% of Hispanic graduates had a job.

● Overall, employment rates are higher for those with more education, especially among women. In 1992, among 25-29 year olds, 85.3% of all women with four or more years of college were employed, more than twice the percentage of working high school dropouts. Among men, 88.5% of college graduates and 68.3% of high school dropouts were employed.

● Hispanic women who were 25-34 years old with a Bachelor's degree earned a median annual income of \$23,865 in 1992, more than twice as much high school graduates (\$11,938), and more than two and a half times as much as high school dropouts (\$9,578).

● Hispanic men who were 25-34 years old with a Bachelor's degree earned a median annual income of \$27,609 in 1992, compared to the \$17,093 of high school graduates and \$12,301 of high school dropouts.

● Although both White and Hispanic women earn less than their male counterparts, there are fewer discrepancies between their earnings than those of White and Hispanic men. In 1992, the median income of Hispanic men was 44% that of White men, while the median income of Hispanic women was 77% of White women.

● One in four working adults overall, but less than one in five Hispanics, have received work-related training on their job.

● The percentage of year-round, full-time workers with low earnings increased for all workers from 1969 to 1990. However, workers with less than twelve years of schooling were three times more likely to earn low wages in 1990 than workers with 13 or more years of schooling.

This publication was produced by the ASPIRA institute for Policy Research, which receives core funding from the Anheuser-Busch Companies. Prepared by Elizabeth Weiser Ramirez and Kimberly Linde.

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New project promotes culturally-sensitive change

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awarded ASPIRA Inc. de Puerto Rico a \$300,000 grant to carry out a new pilot program that will provide culturally sensitive family-to-family counseling and personal support. The COMPAY project will be a part of the Foundation's "Free to Grow: Head Start Partnership to Promote Substance Free Communities" campaign.

The COMPAY project, part of ASPIRA de Puerto Rico's Head Start at Home Program, will train ten families in the Jardines de Palmarero community to counsel and help ten other families who are identified as being at risk of substance abuse. The program uses the

traditional influence of "compadres" in Puerto Rico, an culture to curtail substance abuse in the community. The word COMPAY is short for "compadre", which loosely translated from Spanish means godparent or good friend.

For over 25 years, ASPIRA Inc. de Puerto Rico has provided the Puerto Rican community with services that help in the development of a strong community for youth. Its ongoing Head Start program provides 80 families with health services, nutrition information, pre-school education and social services. ASPIRA is now, and now with the COMPAY project it will include substance abuse prevention and community support.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is the nation's largest health care philanthropy. Its grants work toward four goals: assuring access to basic health services; improving the way services are organized and provided to people with chronic health conditions; promoting health and preventing disease by reducing harm from substance abuse; and seeking opportunities to help the nation address the problem of escalating medical costs.

The foundation requested proposals from 26 organizations with Head Start programs throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico. ASPIRA Inc. de Puerto Rico was one of the top five chosen.

ASPIRA/AAAS collaborate on math/science training

ASPIRA of New York is collaborating with the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) to train parents and leaders from community-based organizations serving the Hispanic community. They will acquire skills, materials and knowledge that will enable them to teach basics on science, mathematics, and technology activities

to other adults and children during off-school hours.

Part of the program will include involvement by scientists and engineers from New York City as role models and instructors. AAAS will develop a resource manual with instructions for replicating the program of hands-on activities.

The two-year education program is sponsored by a \$100,000 grant from the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation. Provetto Futuro is based on a similar program developed and carried out by AAAS in Chicago. The program is trained and provided materials to over 300 teachers and 250 Hispanic parents since 1990.

In Briefs (continued from p. 3)

were the presentations for the Aspirante of the Year Award and the ASPIRA Club of the Year Award. The Summer Career Exploration Program gave 150 high school students the opportunity to explore career opportunities in the private sector while earning money in summer jobs. The Abriendo Caminos adult education program graduated its seventh class in June. Sixty-nine students completed the program, 37 have already obtained their GED and 29 have been successfully placed in full-time employment.

The ASPIRA National Office sponsored a two-day advisory committee meeting for the ASPIRA Parents for Education. Executive APEX project director, Dr. Frederick J. ASPIRA will continue to implement the APEX. Representatives from the ASPIRA Associates met with experts from the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Institute for Educational Leadership, and National Association of College Admissions Counselors, among others.

APEX parents graduate

APEX, a community organizing initiative that trains parents to work together to improve education in their communities, recently celebrated the graduation of its second class this summer. The ASPIRA Parents for Education (APEX) parents, led by Luz Cintrón and Rosa Gómez, planned and led the graduation recognition celebration for 14 parents on May 23. ASPIRA of Illinois also held a graduation ceremony for over ninety parents on June 2 at the Roberto Clemente Community Academy.

Associate Offices receive TRIO funding

Hundreds of high schools will continue to receive college counseling and hundreds more will be added to the list as ASPIRA Associate Offices receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education for their 1995-96 TRIO Talent Search programs.

ASPIRA of Illinois, ASPIRA of New York, ASPIRA of New York City, ASPIRA of Puerto Rico received renewal funding for their Talent Search programs. ASPIRA of Florida was funded for the first time to be serving nearly 1,000 students. And ASPIRA of Pennsylvania

which had not received funding since 1991 won back its funding.

"With this new grant we will be able to again serve more students with a quality program," said Michael Magnozzi, Program Director at ASPIRA of Pennsylvania. "Being defunded made us really pull our strengths together these past three years. We developed a lot of new community support. Now we'll be able to turn that experience and hard work back into the program. We can be more visible again in the high schools, and offer students more hands-on educational

tools and expanded experiences of what college is like."

ASPIRA Talent Search programs provide culturally-sensitive counseling services to low-income students free of charge. The programs include academic, financial and personal counseling assistance with the re-entry process to high school or college, information on postsecondary education, and assistance in completing tests and applications. Talent Search also provides special activities for seventh and eighth graders, and high school or college dropouts.

TOPS students visit Texas Governor

When Governor Ann Richards of Texas spoke to a group of students from Cunningham Middle School in Corpus Christi, their faces lit up. Twelve students, their parents, teachers and members of the Mexican American Bar Association were invited to meet the Governor at her office in Austin, Texas as a result of the success of their ASPIRA Teachers, Organizations, and Parents for Students (TOPS) program.

Rami Chavez, coordinator of the Corpus Christi TOPS program at

Cunningham Middle School, said he was really impressed by the generosity of the Governor. He said she spent over an hour talking to the students, a considerable amount of time for a busy governor.

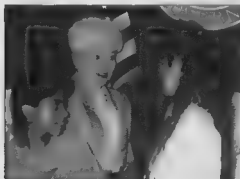
"The governor took a lot of time to speak with the kids," said Chavez. "She asked them questions like 'What's your favorite subject?' and 'What do you like about that subject?'" She was very interested in what the students had to say. Everyone was amazed."

Parents of the students also enjoyed the visit. Chavez said the parents were

excited to meet the governor and excited for their children.

"Our kids come from really low economic backgrounds," said Chavez. "The things we do are beyond their dreams, expectations."

Chavez said the visit went so well that there might be other visits in the future. He said he thinks the governor is looking for models of a successful program to follow and is looking closely at ASPIRA.



Governor Ann Richards greets Corpus Christi participants of the ASPIRA TOPS program.

Aspirantes on the Move

Luis R. Cancel, an Aspirante from New York, was selected as president of the American Council for the Arts (ACA) this April.

Sara Melendez, a former national Board member and a founder of ASPIRA of Connecticut, Inc., has been named president of the Independent Sector, a national philanthropic group.

Maria Santiago Santiago, for many years an ASPIRA Board member, has been named the Secretary's Regional Representative for Region II of the U.S. Department of Education.



Legislative Update

Un paso pa'lante y dos pa'tras. Legislative advocacy on behalf of Latino students has felt like the proverbial one step forward, two back in recent months. There are a number of highlights to point to. But they occur within an atmosphere of constricted social spending and a growing backlash against immigrants. What has been going on in our nation's capitol?

Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

For the first time, the Hispanic community had a number of positive amendments included in the House of Representatives' version of the federal omnibus elementary/secondary education bill. The Congressional Hispanic Caucus introduced amendments supported by a unified lobbying effort from Hispanic organizations coordinated by the Hispanic Education Coalition, which ASPIRA co-chairs. The Caucus amendments included provisions to increase the accessibility and sensitivity to limited-English proficient (LEP) children of Chapter 1, the government's largest education program, as well as to strengthen and broaden the Bilingual Education Act.

However, the Senate bill, which was voted on in late July, includes fewer of the Caucus-proposed amendments. Hispanic advocates are left hoping that Hispanic-serving amendments will survive the upcoming House-Senate conference to determine the shape of the final bill.

Xenophobic amendments pop up in debate

Certain congresspeople have used the Elementary and Secondary Education Act debate to raise anti-immigrant issues. So far, action on these issues has been rather positive. In the House of

Representatives, amendments that would have limited or eliminated education services to immigrant and language-minority children were defeated resoundingly after intense floor debate. In the Senate, an amendment that would shift all fiscal responsibility for the education of these children onto the federal government was withdrawn in favor of increased funding authority to the existing emergency immigrant education program.

The debate continues, however. A defeated amendment to the House education appropriations bill would have denied any federal funding for education of undocumented children. Health and welfare benefits for immigrants continue to be chipped away during the reform debates on these issues. And the states of California and Florida have already sued the federal government for reimbursement of the educational services they provide to undocumented students, with California gearing up for a challenge to the Supreme Court decision giving these children the right to attend school.

House appropriates small increase for education

Part of the reason for scapegoating immigrants, of course, is money. The House of Representatives in June passed an education appropriations bill that would provide a mere 2.3 percent increase over current spending. New programs of the Clinton Administration would receive the bulk of any increase, along with the Chapter 1 program. Most programs, however, would receive an increase below the inflation rate, and a few programs—most notably Pell Grants—would receive substantial cuts.

On a brighter note, Hispanic-Serving Institutions (those colleges and universities with a Latino enrollment over 25%) will receive funding for the first time with a \$12 million appropriation. These 100+ schools enroll about half of all Latino college students.

A final House-Senate appropriations bill is expected by Oct. 1.

Goals 2000, President's school reform strategy, signed into law

The Goals 2000 Educate America Act is one of the winners in the budget process. While the new law is not as strong as advocates would want, there is mandated extensive community involvement in the process. This is an opening that state and local advocates can use to call for improved education for Latino students.

Aspirantes discussed for key positions

Who sits around the table—who makes the decisions—is one of the key questions for Latino community advancement. The National Hispanic Leadership Agenda, of which ASPIRA is a board member, in June gave the Clinton Administration a C- for their record of high-ranking Latino appointments. This is an improvement over earlier reports, due to improvements in hiring in the Departments of Education and HHS. However, four cabinet agencies—Commerce, Energy, Interior, and State—still have no Latino appointees.

Two Aspirantes—District court judge José Cabranes and HUD General Counsel Nelson Diaz—recently had their names floated for possible high-level positions. Cabranes, a former chairperson of ASPIRA of New York, was supported by the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Hispanic National Bar Association, and many other organizations as a candidate for the recent opening on the U.S. Supreme Court. And Diaz, a New York Aspirante and long-time supporter of ASPIRA of Pennsylvania, had his name circulated for possible chairmanship of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Neither man received a nomination, although Cabranes is now a nominee to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

Two Aspirantes have, however, been named to the long-awaited President's

ASPIRA of Illinois celebrates 25 years

"Building Latino Leadership" was the theme for ASPIRA of Illinois' 25th Anniversary celebration. The theme, as many people from Illinois saw it, represents ASPIRA's impact on the entire Latino community.

The celebration started in the afternoon of May 26, when Puerto Rican singing sensation Marc Anthony dropped by the ASPIRA office to sign some autographs and take pictures with the staff. A few hours later the festivities began with a reception honoring the people who have helped ASPIRA of Illinois become a success, such as Mayor Richard J. Daley, State Representative Edgar López, Commissioner Benjamin Reyes and Alder-

man Billy Ocasio. During the reception, there was a dedication in honor of José Matos-Real, ASPIRA's former National Chairperson who recently passed away. Matos-Real had also been Chair of the ASPIRA of Illinois board of directors and a mentor to all the students he met.

Later in the evening, the board of directors hosted a gala concert dance for ASPIRA of Illinois. Marc Anthony, La Orquesta Sabor, and

ASPIRA's own El Son Del Barrio performed to an excited crowd of well over 500 ASPIRA supporters until after 4 a.m.



Jaime Santana, ASPIRA National Chairperson, and Aida Sanchez, Illinois Executive Director, pose with Puerto Rican singer Marc Anthony.

ASPIRA of New Jersey hires experienced staffer as new Executive Director

Roberto Del Rios, who has been with ASPIRA of New Jersey since 1987, was selected as the new Executive Director of that office in April of this year. Before his selection as executive director, he was Director of Programs and administered daily program operations since 1988.

Del Rios supervises four program centers throughout New Jersey and over 15 programs. He is also responsible for the financial management and development of the agency.

Aside from working as executive director, Del Rios is active in several community and academic organizations. He is on the Board of Directors for La Casa de Don Pedro Federal Credit Union and on the Advisory Board at Rutgers College. He was also the National Treasurer for Lambda Theta Phi, a national Latino Fraternity for two years.

Del Rios earned his BA in Psychology and Sociology from Rutgers University. He also earned his Master's in Social Work at Rutgers University School of Social Work.

Del Rios has several plans for the ASPIRA office, including stronger parental involvement, expanding the ASPIRA clubs to middle schools, and increased community involvement.

"I think it would be ideal if a child joined ASPIRA when he/she was a sixth grader and stayed with ASPIRA until high school. When they graduated from high school the student would be equipped to deal with anything," said Del Rios. "This is all part of the ASPIRA Process."

Legislative Corner (continued)

Advisory Commission for Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. Former National Executive Director Janice Petrovich, now at the Ford Foundation, and long-time ASPIRA board member Isaura Santiago Santiago, President of Hostos College, will advise the President on how federal education policies affect Hispanic students.

Save this Date !

On October 25 and 26, the College Board, ASPIRA, and the Council of the Great City Schools, will co-sponsor EQUITY 2000's National Conference. The conference, called "Institutionalizing Reform: Policy to Practice," will be held at the Omni-Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C. For further information please contact Elizabeth Weiser Ramirez at 202-835-3600.

Aspirante brings life to poor children

Aspirante Jaime Martinez, M.D., describes his high school as the one with the worst attrition rate in New York. Nevertheless, Martinez went on to become a doctor practicing Adolescent Medicine at Chicago's Cook County Children's Hospital. He attributes some of his success to ASPIRA and his family.

Dr. Martinez remembers that in high school he was strong in math and science but he did not even have a chemistry course. He also remembers being told by a junior high school teacher to forget college, especially since it was expensive and his family was too poor.

Luckily for him, the ASPIRA Brooklyn Center was organizing parents in the "projects" and his mother soon got him involved. At the ASPIRA Brooklyn Center, college students helped him by tutoring him on Saturday mornings and by serving as role models. ASPIRA counselors motivated him in high school, taught him about a sense of community, and instructed him in the history of Puerto Rico. The ASPIRA club in his high school was called El Flamboyán, and Martinez and other members created and implemented a reading program tutoring junior high school youth failing in school. ASPIRA, his family, along with his interest in math and science, led him to pursue a health career. He eventually graduated third in his class from Eastern District

High School in Brooklyn, New York and entered Yale University.

Dr. Martinez characterizes the transition to college as a cultural and academic shock. While earning his undergraduate degree in Biology at Yale, Dr. Martinez said he found it difficult to fit in culturally. He met other Latinos who were also Aspirantes and attempted to develop a sense of a community on campus. After graduation, he continued his education at the New Jersey Medical School at Newark. There he found even greater difficulties.

"I remember hating medical school because it was very difficult to survive if you didn't get along. This was because there were only about five Puerto Ricans out of a class of 110, and the pressures to study, and share notes/information in the midst of contrasting personalities in a competitive environment was often difficult," said Dr. Martinez. "Medical school was also where I faced most of my obstacles concerning financial aid."

Dr. Martinez financed his post-secondary education mostly through loans and grants. He financed approximately three-fourths of his graduate and medical school expenses through loans. During his college years Dr. Martinez again turned to ASPIRA for assistance. To his relief, he learned of ASPIRA's help in paying for application fees and provid-

ing information on schools that were accepting minorities. He also received advice from ASPIRA staff who were involved in the admission process of various colleges and medical schools.

After medical school, Dr. Martinez trained in a three year Pediatrics residency program in Newark, New Jersey, and two year Fellowship program in Adolescent Medicine, in Baltimore, Maryland. He then went to develop a teaching program in Adolescent Medicine in Miami, at a hospital serving primarily a well to do community. He realized he wanted to work with a less well-off community. He moved to Chicago and currently works in the Cook County Public Hospital, where 99% of his patients are Latino or African American, and primarily indigent. Dr. Martinez is also an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Illinois at Chicago. In the future, he aspires to become chairperson of the Pediatrics Department or medical director of a hospital.

When asked to pick the most valuable lesson learned at ASPIRA, Dr. Martinez replied, "Perseverance . . . although at times it may become a personal struggle, stick with your goals and share with your community."

Martinez has continued his affiliation with ASPIRA by serving on the Board of Directors of ASPIRA of Florida and is presently Chairperson of ASPIRA of Illinois.

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PBS's Magic School Bus

Magic School Bus, a fully animated science adventure series for young people, will air on PBS this fall. Program guides to support the program are available free to the public in Spanish and English. ASPIRA joined other youth-serving institutions such as Girls Inc., 4-H, YouthAlive, the National Urban League and Girl Scouts of America in reviewing the guide. To receive a free copy of the Magic School Bus Activity Guide in Spanish or English write to The ASPIRA Association, 1112 16th St. NW, Suite 340, Washington, DC 20036.

20th Anniversary of Consent Decree

Twenty years ago this month ASPIRA won a landmark legal victory on behalf of Puerto Rican children in New York City. On August 29, 1974, ASPIRA of New York, Inc. and the New York City Board of Education signed what has come to be known as the "ASPIRA Consent Decree." The ASPIRA Consent Decree forced New York City Public Schools to provide bilingual instruction to Puerto Rican children whose full participation in the learning process was being restricted by English-only methods.

The decree represented over two years of research and litigation on the part of ASPIRA staff and a dedicated

group of attorneys from the newly-created Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund (PRLDEF). Community members, educators and various experts provided key support in the community's struggle.

In spite of overwhelming evidence that bilingual education was necessary for there to be equal educational opportunity for Puerto Rican students, state and local education officials had repeatedly balked at the implementation of bilingual programs. The *New York Times* commented in an editorial that the ASPIRA Consent Decree resulted in the New York City Schools being "dragged into progress".

The Decree ordered the Board of Education to identify students based on their ability to read, write, and speak both Spanish and English. It called for intensive instruction in English; instruction in subject areas in Spanish; instruction to reinforce the children's Spanish language skills; and the use of culturally appropriate materials. As part of the agreement, the Board of Education was to report on their continued compliance with the Decree to ASPIRA of New York. The New York office has been monitoring implementation of the Consent Decree since then.

Boricua First Campaign forges ahead in preparations

The Boricua First Campaign to promote a unified Puerto Rican agenda and mobilize the community continues its planning for a fall leadership summit. ASPIRA is a member of the Steering Committee for the campaign. All of the national Puerto Rican organizations have now endorsed the effort.

The campaign will hold a national leadership summit in Washington, DC on October 21-22 (note that this is a

change from earlier announcements). According to national coordinator Luis Cabán, the summit will develop a political strategy to address the public policy issues of concern to the community. "We won't spend time rehashing what the issues are," Cabán said. "The issues have been studied to death. What we need is a strategy for action."

The conference will invite Puerto Rican experts and leaders in various fields,

in addition to two representatives from each organization or institution wanting to participate. Organizations must either be governed by Puerto Ricans or specifically serve the Puerto Rican community.

Brochures announcing the summit were mailed in early August. If you did not receive a brochure and are interested in attending, call the Boricua First Campaign at 1-800-476-4462 to request information.

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ASPIRA News is published by the ASPIRA Association, Inc., National Office, (202) 835-9900; subscriptions are \$10 annually. ASPIRA was founded in 1961 to promote education and leadership development and to advocate on behalf of Puerto Rican and Latino youth. It currently has offices in Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Puerto Rico, with the National Office in Washington, DC. Please address inquiries and comments to Elizabeth Weiser Ramirez, editor. Ronald Blackburn-Moreno, National Executive Director. Miguel Bonilla, Paloma Marchand, Antigoni Koumpouris, Laura Hurtado, and Joe Luft contributed articles to this issue.